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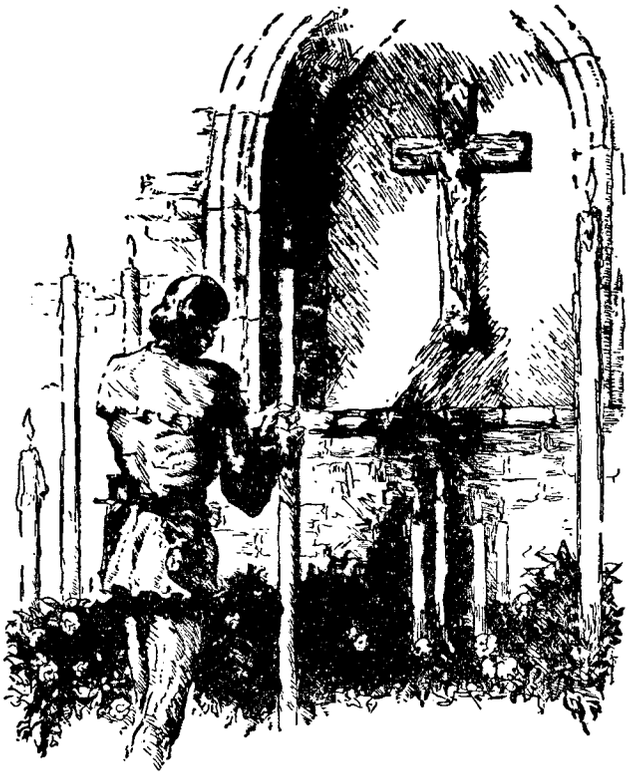

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THIS WEEK

Week by Week 213

Education and Christian Culture
by Christopher Dawson 216

Why the Swedes Are Sad
by Donat O'Donnell 221

The Stage
by Richard Hayes 224

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 225

The Museum Without Walls
by Michael Harrington 227

Book Reviews 231

Critics' Choice for Christmas 236

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Contributing Editors:
PHILIP BURNHAM, ANNE FREMANTLE

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

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THE Commonweal

week by week

THE SHADOWS OF THE PAST

LAST week's lead editorial on the Harry Dexter White case concluded by stating our belief that Mr. Herbert Brownell, the Attorney General, had turned it "into the most disreputable political adventure of the year." Since we wrote these words Mr. Brownell has appeared before the Jenner Committee to testify on his now historic charge that Harry Dexter White "was known to be a Communist spy by the very people [Harry S. Truman] who appointed him" to a high government position. Having read Mr. Brownell's testimony we have taken another look at our first conclusion. It will, we think, stand.

To say this is not to exonerate Harry S. Truman from the charge of past "laxity" in the matter of Communist subversion in the United States government. Nor is it to condone his present lack of candor in owning up to the mistakes of the past. Mr. Brownell has explained that he did not mean "treason" when he made his original charge (although treason is the only logical inference which can be drawn from the words he used). What he actually meant, he now insists, was "blindness." On this score we think there can be little disputing him—for he is on old and solid ground.

Blindness toward the dangers of subversion was a disease which afflicted many honorable men from 1940 until 1946. If this is what is involved in the White controversy—and even Mr. Brownell seems to admit that it is since he disclaims any imputation of disloyalty to Mr. Truman—then we must ask why this bitter issue has now been raised in the partisan manner it has, and what its long range effects are likely to be. In answering these questions, the folly and danger of Mr. Brownell's course become apparent.

THE besetting sin, the tragic flaw, of the Republican party during the past twenty years has been its appalling insensitivity to history and its consequent inability to see things in their historical context. Because of this it has frequently been unable to distinguish the major from the minor, the pertinent from the irrelevant, the fact from the fiction.

The hope of many was that this flaw would be remedied when the Republican party gained its national victory last fall; that in the exercise of power it would learn responsibility. Such hope seems dim after the events of the past two weeks. The Republican party's determination to avoid facing the problems of the present seems adamant. We are fated to argue forever, it seems, over the ambiguities of the past.

For the 1945-46 "blindness" of the Truman Administration in the matter of subversion is not a real issue now. However unfortunate this blindness may have been, the Truman Administration recovered from it to wage a relentless war against the Communist conspiracy. *This* is the fact. To ignore it and to concentrate only on the murky issues of the immediate post-war years is a folly which invites national disaster.

President Eisenhower put his finger on it when, in answer to a question about the issue of Communists in government, he expressed his hope that this issue would be forgotten by the 1954 elections. "We cannot continue to live in fear of each other," he said. Exactly. Mr. Truman's mistakes of seven years ago—mistakes in which at worst only a question of judgment was involved—are not pertinent to what we must now decide. Those who would obscure present issues by resurrecting those mistakes for partisan advantage are guilty of their own blindness, their own treason to the future.

Tragically, the President seems unwilling to translate his fine sentiments into action. He is determined to avoid "controversy." And so as Mr. Brownell plans a whole series of "disclosures" and Mr. Hall plans to use them to retain the GOP in power, the whole nation will be plunged deeper and deeper into the bitterness of the past. In the resulting atmosphere continued Democratic support for the President's constructive policies will certainly be weakened. Such are the dangers we now face.

The Republicans will not gain from the course

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upon which they have now embarked. The Democrats will not gain. No one, in fact, will gain—except the Soviet Union. As the level of political discussion in America sinks lower, as we immerse ourselves more thoroughly in the shadows of the past, the only loser can be ourselves, the only gainer freedom's mortal enemy. To avoid this we must, once and for all, leave nightmares behind and begin to apply ourselves to things as they actually are.

NEW STIMSON DOCTRINE

IF there is to be moral order in the community of nations, changes in territory and sovereignty can hardly be effected by sheer force—or against the wishes of the people. This widely accepted principle has been repeatedly violated, with impunity, by both the great and small Powers. So that twenty years ago when Secretary Stimson refused to recognize the Japanese conquest of Manchuria, and declared that the United States would not recognize territorial changes achieved by conquest, he was held to be enunciating a new doctrine.

Non-recognition had little effect in restraining the Japanese in their subjugation of Manchuria or in plans for further conquests. It contributed heavily to the antagonism that culminated in Pearl Harbor. For we stigmatized the Japanese for their aggressions yet made little effort to lessen the economic pressures that served as a pretext for expansion.

The Stimson Doctrine did, however, serve notice that the United States stood firmly for morality in international relations. If World War II had ended in a different fashion, the years of non-recognition might have had a direct practical effect. But the Soviet forces swept down through Manchuria.

How much can be expected of the current reaffirmation of this doctrine by Secretary Dulles? Is it largely something for the record? This time, under the Soviet thumb, there are some fifteen subject peoples. The USSR appears no more disposed to relinquish one acre of newly-subject territory than the Japanese were. Yet the lands of these enslaved peoples are so situated that our adamant non-recognition has one immediate practical effect: it helps keep alive a spirit of resistance that serves as a constant threat to whatever lines of communication would have to be set up if the USSR were to strike westward.

But can this flame be continuously kept alive in the face of unrelenting pressure? Not by mere non-recognition itself. The Iron Curtain will have to be pierced again and again by testimony that the democratic world outside is deeply concerned over the plight of the captives and is bent on their liberation. Evidence has to be multiplied, also, that a good life exists in the non-Soviet world, a life notable for its freedoms and security, for its solidly based human hopes. Only then can much be expected from an eventual disintegration of the Russian Empire. In such a framework refusal to make any agreements with the USSR based on acceptance of continued subjection of the satellites may be able to hasten the day.

NEXT WEEK

JOHN COGLEY contributes his first dispatch direct from the Middle East.

"General Naguib personally is an affable, twinkle-eyed, gentle-mannered man, a little like the benign Stalin-image of the propaganda posters. He surprises you somewhat by his direct manner, seeming candor and democratic ways. During our interview, for instance, he did not sit at a great desk so that like the Duce in Chaplin's 'Great Dictator' he would be looking down on all others. He sat, rather, on a plain chair next to mine and talked as simply and directly as a shopkeeper. I began the interview by asking him what role he thought the U.S. should play in the life of the Middle East. It brought on a torrential reply."

"THIS HURTS ME MORE . . ."

SOME of the sharpest criticisms of UN activities to appear in the Catholic press in this country have been printed in the *Tidings,* the diocesan paper of Los Angeles. As a result, a good many observers came to the conclusion that the *Tidings* is anti-UN. But evidently that is not the case at all. Recently the editors have been stung by suggestions that their editorial position on such matters conflicts with Papal pronouncements on the subject of international organization, and they have therefore proceeded to set the record straight.

Critics of the UN like itself, says the *Tidings,* are really supporters of that organization. "None is more anxious than they that these agencies succeed. . . . It is idle to lament the cleavage in our Catholic press in the estimation of these organizations, after all the last best hope of earth. This is a really healthy sign of objectivity and independence of thought. . . ."

We are all for independence of thought, but it is nice to learn that the *Tidings* is really for the UN,

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after all. Now we have only one worry on this score. After reading a few *Tidings* editorials on the subject, we are afraid that a little more support like this and the UN will be as dead as the League of Nations.

SKIRMISH IN INDIANAPOLIS

ALMOST every week another example crops up somewhere to indicate the extent to which fear of the "controversial" is spreading. One of the most recent of such incidents took place in Indianapolis, where the American Civil Liberties Union had scheduled a meeting in an auditorium of the Indiana War Memorial Building—a meeting, incidentally, of which the Dean of the Law School at the University of Notre Dame was one of the sponsors.

When the ACLU meeting was announced, the local American Legion post and an organization known as the Minute Women protested. The ACLU was a front for Communist organizations, the Legion said, and this despite recommendations from such people as General Douglas MacArthur, Governor Thomas E. Dewey and President Eisenhower himself. Discussion of civil liberties was "controversial," and the ACLU was denied the use of the hall.

This kind of thing is happening more and more often, and there is nothing particularly unusual about this incident except that it had a happier ending than most. Local leaders of the ACLU now report that the meeting will be held after all, in the hall of Saint Mary's Church and at the express invitation of Father Victor L. Goossens, the pastor of the parish. It is encouraging to note that there are still people who do not equate a discussion of civil liberties with subversion and, more important, are not afraid to stand up and say so.

JAPAN IN TRANSITION

JAPAN is a nation which has been postponing crisis week by week. During the Korean war the enormous spending of the United Nations Command and of Allied soldiers on liberty made the difference between poverty and solvency to the Japanese economy.

The nation knew this bounty could not last, but did little to prepare for its end. The government placed its hopes on new United States expenditures for Korean reconstruction. But in many economic areas, there was little Japan alone could do. China, the principal customer in the past for Japanese industry, was at war with the United States. American trade barriers are high and aren't coming down. Britain has not been overly friendly.

The democracy of Japan is also in precarious balance. The dominant Liberal party (rightist) has more than its share of tired and cynical old men. And the factions of the left have yet to agree on a coherent program. Only in the last election was there a tendency towards polarization in the left and right. Internal divisions have served to keep the government from undertaking a strong program.

Communism in Japan has shown unusual resiliency and adaptability. The post-war Communist movement thoroughly discredited itself in the May Day riots of 1952. But the Communists regrouped as a pro-Chinese, anti-American movement, not overtly Communist. The new strategy fit admirably into the post-occupation mood of the Japanese people: sick of war, restive at the continued presence of American troops, conscious of their racial ties to China, proud.

The new Communists (as "left-socialists") are a heavy influence in the *Sohyo,* the labor organization which includes two-thirds of Japan's five million organized workers. They were helped by the government's sponsorship of some repressive anti-labor legislation. That particular battle is not yet won; there is a lively anti-Communist minority in the *Sohyo*. But the tide in Japan is running for the Communists, and no one knows how long yet before peak-tide.

In this situation, the United States has played an inevitably clumsy role. We forced pacifism on the Japanese, and then gave them an army. We signed a treaty granting sovereignty, but are compelled to station divisions there, which are a mounting source of ill-will.

Tallying problems does not solve them, and here the solutions are not to be made in Washington. American policy is to help Japan build its own defenses, and then to remove the bulk of the American garrison. Vice President Nixon's Tokyo speech of November 19th, frankly admitting the American mistake in writing a ban on war potential into the Japanese constitution, was an interesting and useful move. The only other step we might take would be a lowering of U.S. tariffs—something quite unlikely.

What remains to be done must be done by the Japanese themselves. Thus far, Premier Yoshida and his government have been able to push away the crisis, and the democratic opposition has been able to afford the luxury of ideology and partisanship. But the shadow has fallen on the Japanese, and the Communists are militant and ready.

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Education and Christian Culture

MODERN SOCIETY IS UNINTELLIGIBLE UNLESS IT IS STUDIED AS HAVING ROOTS DEEP IN CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

FATHER Leo R. Ward's article in The Commonweal of September 25, "Is There a Christian Learning?" draws attention to a problem of which I have been increasingly conscious during recent years. At first sight it may seem surprising that there is any need for the discussion of such a problem, at least among Catholic educationalists, for one would have expected that the whole question would have been threshed out years ago and there was no longer room for any difference of opinion. But as a matter of fact this is far from being the case, and the more one looks into the subject, the more one is struck by the vagueness and uncertainty of educated opinion in this matter and the lack of any accepted doctrine or educational policy.

No doubt the situation in all the English-speaking countries differs essentially from that of Catholic Europe where the Church has either preserved a privileged position in educational matters or, more frequently, has been forced to resist the hostile pressure of an anticlerical or "laicist" regime. The Catholics of the English-speaking countries, in England as well as in America and in Australasia, have not had to face the continental type of political anticlericalism, but on the other hand, they have had no privileged position and no established educational institutions of their own. They have had to rebuild their whole educational system from the bottom upwards with their own scanty resources. And so the main problem of Catholic education in the English-speaking countries has been the problem of the primary school—how to secure the necessary minimum of religious instruction for their children.

The urgency of this issue has relegated all the problems of higher education to the second place. We have felt that if we can save the schools, the universities can look after themselves. And in fact they have done so, up to a point. Catholics have managed to adapt themselves fairly successfully to the English and American systems of higher education. Nevertheless it has been a question of adaptation to an external system and we have had little opportunity to decide what the nature of higher education should be or to create our own curriculum of studies.

ALL this is comparatively simple. But it is much more difficult to explain the situation in the past, when the Church dominated the whole educational system—schools, colleges and universities—and determined the whole course of higher studies. Surely one would have expected that the study of Christian culture would have formed the basis of the higher studies and that the foundations of an educational tradition would have been laid which would have dominated Christian education ever since. But what actually happened was that for centuries higher education had been so identified with the study of one particular historic culture—that of ancient Greece and Rome—that there was no room left for anything else. Even the study of our own particular national culture, including both history and literature, did not obtain full recognition until the 19th century, while the concept of Christian culture as an object of study has never been recognized at all.

The great obstacle to this study has not been religious or secularist prejudices but strictly cultural. It has its origins in the idealization of classical antiquity by the humanist scholars and artists who rediscovered the beauty of nature. And it followed from this conception that the period that intervened between the fall of Rome and the Renaissance offered the historian, as Voltaire says, "the barren prospect of a thousand years of stupidity and barbarism." They were "middle ages" in the original sense of the word—that is, a kind of cultural vacuum between two ages of cultural achievement which (to continue the same quotation) "vindicate the greatness of the human spirit."

This view, which necessarily ignores the achievements and even the existence of Christian culture, was passed on almost unchanged from the Renaissance to the 18th-century Enlightenment and from the latter to the modern secularist ideologies. And though

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Mr. Dawson, the eminent British historian and writer, is author of "Progress and Religion" and "The Making of Europe," among other works.

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today every instructed person recognizes that it is based on a completely erroneous view of history and very largely on a sheer ignorance of history, it still continues to exert an immense influence, both consciously and unconsciously, on modern education and on our attitude to the past.

It is therefore necessary for educators to make a positive effort to exorcise the ghost of this ancient error and to give the study of Christian culture the place that it deserves in modern education. We cannot leave this to the medievalists alone, for they are to some extent themselves tied to the error by the limitation of their specialism. For Christian culture is not the same thing as medieval culture. It existed before the Middle Ages began and it continued to exist after they had ended. We cannot understand medieval culture unless we study its foundations in the age of the Fathers and the Christian Empire, and we cannot understand the classical vernacular literatures of post-Renaissance Europe unless we study their roots in medieval culture. Even the Renaissance itself, as Conrad Burdach and E. R. Curtius have shown, is not intelligible unless it is studied as part of a movement which had its origins deep in the Middle Ages.

Now it seems to me that the time is ripe for a new approach to the subject, since our whole educational system—and not in one country alone, but throughout the Western world—is passing through a period of rapid and fundamental change. The old domination of classical humanism has passed away, and nothing has taken its place except the scientific specialisms which do not provide a complete intellectual education, but rather tend to disintegrate into technologies. Every educator recognizes that this is unsatisfactory. A scientific specialist or a technologist who has nothing but his specialism is not an educated person. He tends to become merely an instrument of the industrialist or the bureaucrat, a worker ant in an insect society, and the same is true of the literary specialist, though his social function is less obvious.

But even the totalitarians do not accept this solution; on the contrary, they insist most strongly on the importance of the cultural element in education whether their ideal of culture is nationalist and racial as with the Nazis, or cosmopolitan and proletarian as with the Communists. No doubt from our point of view this totalitarian culture means the forcible indoctrination of scientist and worker alike with the same narrow party ideology, but at least it does provide a simple remedy for the disintegrating effects of modern specialization and gives the whole educational system a unifying purpose.

HEAVEN forbid that we should attempt to solve our educational problems in this way by imposing a compulsory political ideology on the teacher and the scientist. But we cannot avoid this evil by sitting back and allowing higher education to degenerate into a chaos of competing specialisms without any guidance for the student except the urgent practical necessity of finding a job and making a living as soon as his education is finished. This combination of utilitarianism and specialism is not only fatal to the idea of a liberal education, it is also one of the main causes of the intellectual disintegration of modern Western culture under the aggressive threat of totalitarian nationalism and Communism.

Some cultural education is necessary if Western culture is to survive, and we can no longer rely exclusively on the traditional discipline of classical humanism, though this is the source of all that was best in the tradition of Western liberalism and Western science.

I believe that the study of Christian culture is the missing link which it is essential to supply if the tradition of Western education and Western culture is to survive, for it is only through this study that we can understand how Western culture came to exist and what are the essential values for which it stands.

And when I speak of Western culture I am not using the word in the limited sense in which it was used by Matthew Arnold and the humanists who were concerned only with the highest level of cultivated intelligence, but in the sense of the anthropologists and social historians who have widened it out to cover the whole pattern of human life and thought in a living society. In this sense of the word, a culture is a definite historical unit, but as Dr. Toynbee explains so clearly in the Introduction to his *Study of History,* it has a much wider expansion in space and time than any purely political unit, and it alone constitutes an intelligible field of historical study since no part of it can be properly understood except in relation to the whole.

Now, behind the existing unity of Western culture we have the older unity of Christian culture which is the historic basis of our civilization. For more than a thousand years from the conversion of the Roman Empire down to the Reformation the peoples of Europe were fully conscious of their membership in the great Christian society and accepted the Christian faith and the Christian moral law as the ultimate

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bond of social unity and the spiritual basis of their way of life. And even after the unity of Christendom had been broken by the Reformation, the tradition of Christian culture still survived in the culture and institutions of the different European peoples, and in some cases exists even in the midst of our secularized culture, as we have seen in the English coronation rite during this very year.

Consequently anyone who wishes to understand our own culture as it exists today cannot dispense with the study of Christian culture, whether he is a Christian or not. Indeed in some ways this study is more necessary for the secularist than for the Christian because he lacks that ideological key to the understanding of the past which every Christian ought to possess.

I DO not deny that there are great practical obstacles in the way of this study. The secularist is naturally afraid that it might be used as an instrument of religious propaganda and he is consequently anxious to minimize the importance of the Christian element in our culture and to exaggerate the gulf between modern civilization and the Christian culture of the past.

The Christian, on the other hand, is often afraid lest the historical study of Christian culture should lead to an identification of Christianity with a culture and a social system which belong to the dead past. But for the Christian the past can never be dead, as it often seems to the secularist, since we believe that past and present are united in the one Body of the Church and that the Christians of the past are still present as witnesses and helpers in the life of the Church today.

No doubt it would be an error to apply this principle to the particular forms of Christian culture which are conditioned by material factors and limited by the change of historical circumstances. But as there is an organic relation between the Christian faith and the Christian life, so also there is a relation between Christian life and Christian culture. The relation between faith and life is completely realized only in the life of the saints. But there has never been a temporal society of saints, and the attempt to create one, as in Puritan England or Massachusetts, represents a sectarian perversion of Christian culture. Nevertheless it is the very nature of the Christian faith and the Christian life to penetrate and change the social environment in which they exist, and there is no aspect of human life which is closed to this leavening and transforming process. Thus Christian culture is the periphery of the circle which has its center in the Incarnation and the faith of the Church and the lives of the saints.

All this is to be seen in history. Christianity did actually come into the historical world and did actually transform the societies with which it came into contact: first, the Hellenistic-Oriental society of the Eastern Roman Empire, and secondly, the Latin and barbarian societies of Western Europe. From this two new cultures were born—the Byzantine culture of the East and Western Christendom, both of which, in spite of their ultimate separation, share a large number of common characteristics.

Both of these cultures have now been secularized, but the process of secularization is so recent and even incomplete that it is absolutely impossible to understand them in their secularized form unless we have studied their Christian past.

Unfortunately it is nobody's business to study or to teach this subject and it is extremely difficult under existing conditions for anyone to acquire the necessary knowledge, even if he can spare the time and energy to do so. Nevertheless the very reasons which make the study of the subject so difficult are also reasons in its favor from the educational point of view. They are due to the fact that it is an integrative subject involving the cooperation of a number of different specialized studies, in the same way as the study of *litterae humaniores* in the Greats School at Oxford involves the cooperation of philosophers and historians as well as philologists and literary critics.

How then could such a study be instituted? It involves, like Classical Greats at Oxford, a cooperative study of Christian philosophy, Christian literature and Christian history. To do this we require at least a study of medieval Latin and a language other than our own—preferably French—as well as a study of English. Above all, it is necessary to study the three main phases of the Christian Culture: (1) its origins in the age of the Fathers and in the Christian Empire; (2) its development in the so-called Middle Ages when Christian Culture achieved classical form in the philosophy of Saint Thomas and Saint Bonaventure, the poetry of Dante and the art of the Gothic cathedral, and (3) its flowering in the vernacular cultures and literatures down to the 17th century.

This no doubt seems an ambitious program, but it is strictly analogous to the old humanist study which embraced the whole of classical culture in its

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three phases, as represented by the Homeric Age, the classical age of Attic culture, and the Latin culture of the Augustan and post-Augustan periods.

Nor is it so ambitious as some of the introductory general courses in the history of civilization in general which are actually being introduced at some of the American universities and which, I understand, have proved quite workable in practice. The essential thing is not to attempt to cram students with a complete knowledge of the history of Christian culture, but to introduce them to the subject, so that they will at least realize the existence of the whole, before they are irretrievably committed to a specialized study of the part or of a particle of the part.

TODAY there is such a growing realization among educators of the dangers of utilitarian specialization and the need for the preservation of some integrative humanizing element in education that I think we may expect to find a good deal of encouragement and support for an experiment of this kind from many different quarters. But the initiative must come from the Christian side, for we can hardly expect government departments or secular universities to introduce such a study on their own account.

It is therefore essential that Christians should realize the importance of the issue and take the lead. Unfortunately Christian opinion is as yet neither clear nor united. I am not thinking of the differences between Catholics and Protestants which are often fundamental, but even among Catholics there is at present great uncertainty and difference of opinion when we come to these cultural questions. Everywhere since the Renaissance and the Reformation, and still more since the Revolution, Catholics have tended to adopt a purely defensive attitude, to live, as has been said, in a state of siege—and to confine themselves to the essential tasks of maintaining the faith and preserving the standard of religious practice in matters essential to the very existence of the Church.

In this way Christian higher studies become more and more identified with ecclesiastical studies which are regarded as the affair of the clergy, and the higher education of the laity becomes increasingly a secular education.

This is understandable and justifiable in the circumstances, so long as it is not regarded as an ideal state of things. But if it is carried too far it is fatal to the cause which it seeks to defend. If you cut down to the bone of religious faith and leave people with nothing else but the bare right of practicing their religion in a completely alien culture, you are left with nothing but the fleshless skeleton of Catholicism. The Ghetto Catholicism of the 19th-century Irish immigration in the factory towns of England and the United States was a remarkable witness to the spiritual vitality of the Faith, but this witness was paid for by an immense leakage of those who were unable to withstand the pressure of their cultural environment and by the narrowness of the type of Catholicism which survived.

It may be said that this was simply a return to the conditions of the early Church and that the Christianity of the catacombs which was the seed of the new Christian culture was precisely the same sociological phenomenon. But we forget that the early Christians had behind them one of the strongest purely religious cultures that has ever existed—I mean that of the Jews. In the eyes of the educated Greek or Roman, the early Christians no doubt seemed to be people of low culture who were cutting themselves off from the intellectual and social life of their age to follow queer oriental superstitions. In actual fact, however, the Gentile convert found not only a new faith and a new spiritual community, but also a new culture which was far richer from the religious point of view than that which he had left. He was introduced into a new world and became the partaker in a literature and a social tradition which reached back to the beginnings of history.

Now the position of the modern Catholic resembles that of the primitive Christian in so far as he also is the heir of the great tradition of sacred culture which has been lost by our modern secularized civilization. If he is deprived of this inheritance and forced to live by sheer faith, naked in an alien culture, his spiritual merit may be all the higher, but his chance of social survival is much smaller and his opportunities to influence the society of his age much more restricted. In that case his situation is not the same as that of the early Christian but rather resembles that of the barbarian converts to Christianity who had received the Faith but as yet possessed no tradition of Christian life and thought and institutions. This was what actually happened in the slums of 19th-century England and America where the social foundations of our modern Catholicism were laid. It was in fact practically a culture-less Catholicism, a society of Christian barbarians.

But that is only one side of the picture. On the other hand, we have the converts, like Newman above all, who brought with them a rich heritage of Christian culture which they had salvaged from a society in process of secularization. It is this dualism and unevenness in the development of the modern English-speaking Catholics (for it is no less characteristic of America than of England) which are the source of our existing problems and opportunities. At the same time we have been faced with the task of the internal restoration of Catholic culture and cultural re-education of the Catholic masses, as well as with the still greater

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task of meeting the external challenge of secular society and reclaiming Western culture for Christ. And the revival of Catholic higher education and the study of Christian culture are of equal importance for the achievement of both these objectives.

IT is easy to take a pessimistic view and to say that we have neither the material nor the economic resources for such vast undertakings, but when we look back one hundred and twenty years and see what has been accomplished both in England and in America, we shall see that there is no real ground for pessimism. A new world of Catholicism has been created out of almost nothing. The achievement is greatest in the United States of America and it is in America that there seems the best prospect for the development of a Catholic culture, owing to greater material resources and to the existence of Catholic universities. On the other hand, English Catholicism has contributed more in proportion to its size in this particular field and it has, I think, achieved a greater degree of contact and penetration into the Protestant and secularist culture.

So I believe that there is a need for cooperation between our two communities and each of us has a great deal to contribute towards this common end. We are both faced with a situation which differs essentially from that of the other European and the other American Catholic communities. We are both minorities in a predominantly Protestant society. We have to encounter secularism, indifferentism and sectarianism, but we are, on the whole, almost completely immune from that ferocious internecine conflict which divides the continental and Latin American Catholic from his anticlerical opponent and which is usually reflected in a political division. Under these conditions, however, there is the risk that it may become too easy for us to accept the standards of our secularized culture and to become assimilated by it. It is therefore all the more important that we should react consciously against it by doing what is in our power to maintain and cultivate the tradition of Christian culture.

The obstacles to this are mainly practical ones—questions of the educational curriculum, of providing facilities for teaching and making the subject sufficiently popular to attract the Catholic student. The actual spade work of providing the materials of study and subjecting them to scientific criticism has already been done for us by the labors of generations of continental scholars. We have only to look at the great series of French Catholic encyclopaedias—*The Dictionary of Theology, The Dictionary of Christian Archaeology and Liturgy, The Dictionary of Ecclesiastical History and Geography,* and, more recently, *The Dictionary of Spirituality and Mysticism*—to see how enormous our resources are. It is really a question of popularization, for there is a very wide gulf between this specialized tradition of Catholic scholarship and the culture of the educated layman.

It is this gap between Catholic scholarship and Catholic lay culture which has been largely responsible in the past for the secularization of our culture. There have never been greater scholars than the Catholics of the 17th century—men like Ducange and Petavius and Tillemont and Mabillon—but they found no Catholics to use their work for educational purposes. The men who utilized their labors and formed the opinion of educated society were their spiritual enemies—men like Bayle and Le Clerc, and Voltaire and Gibbon, who were the most powerful agents in the secularization and perversion of Western culture.

Today the danger is not that Catholic scholarship will be misused this way but that it will not be used at all. As in the 16th century, a break has occurred in the continuity of Western culture, but this time it is of a far more fundamental character and affects everyone whether Catholic or Protestant, Christian or Secularist.

We are passing through a technological revolution which is sweeping away the traditional ways of life and thought and creating a new social mechanism. But while this new order involves an immense increase in the scale and volume of mechanized mass communication, it also makes it much more difficult to maintain the old cultural standards and to preserve the continuity of Western culture. From the secularist point of view this is often regarded as a positive advantage, since for the first time in history it makes it possible to organize the thought and behavior of the masses in new patterns by deliberate social planning and control. But to the Christian the prospect of delivering the soul of the masses to the tender mercies of the planners and the politicians is intolerable, and in the same way any complete break with the past must be rejected since it endangers the continuity of the Christian tradition.

Consequently the more we can realize our spiritual and historical identity by the study of Christian culture, the better we shall be able to withstand the forces of secularization. For behind all the temporal vicissitudes of Christian history and the changing fortunes of Christendom there stands the reality of the one great society which is the hope of humanity and which Saint Peter defined in a memorable sentence as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a special people . . . who in past times were not a people but are now the people of God." All through the ages we see the creative process of sifting and regeneration and re-education out of which a new humanity is being formed; and the history of this process is the only history that really counts for the Christian.

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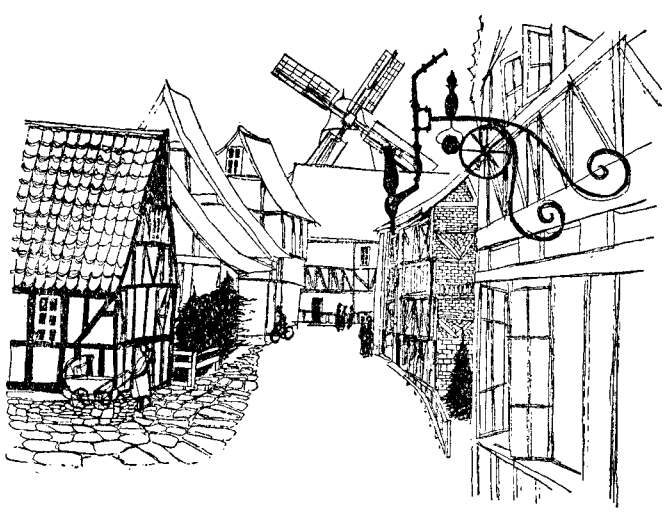
Why the Swedes Are Sad

DONAT O'DONNELL

IN the clear bright autumn air of Gothenburg the neon signs burn without a halo. The reporter who met me at the boat asked me—since I am an Irishman—about Senator McCarthy. I disclaimed knowledge, and went on. His next question was about Churchill: was he worth the Nobel Prize for Literature? I said that if the Prize was intended simply to honor great men, he obviously was, but if it was really, as one supposed, a literary prize, it should have gone to some serious writer, such as Mr. Ernest Hemingway. This interview appeared in the afternoon paper under the headline: "Churchill's Nobel Prize Makes Irish Happy."

It is depressing that, in coming to lecture on James Joyce, one should be questioned about Senator McCarthy and Churchill and it is characteristic, not of anything peculiar to Sweden, but of the anxious atmosphere of Europe in general. Politics everywhere are the surface preoccupation, or rather political ideas—even quite frivolous ones—are the form in which deep anxieties and doubts become articulate. A word like "McCarthy" is a nervous twitch, in some, or, with others, a little gesture of defiance: "here in the very shadow of Soviet Russia, we, at any rate, are not going to panic." As for the Churchill Nobel Prize it is perhaps a symbol of the general, and detestable, tendency for "Western values" to huddle together, like sheep awaiting slaughter. Educated Swedes have an excellent knowledge of English literature and many of them are quite conscious that Sir Winston's contributions to literature belong on the same plane as those of, say, Philip Guedalla. None the less it seems to give them a warm feeling to put literature, as it were, under the protection of the indomitable old man. If pressed about the muzziness of the whole proceeding, they have a last line of retreat: "After all, we gave it to Pearl Buck, didn't we?"

It is easy to remember the predominance of politics when talking to a journalist or a member of the Swedish Academy: it is, more often, easy to forget it, in any one of those handsome clear-cut middle-class interiors which seem to speak at the same time of victory over a harsh environment, and of confidence in power to resist the new kind of harshness in the world's climate, the cold wind from across the Baltic. The Swedish middle-class complains, gravely and moderately, of the high cost of socialism—the Swedish welfare state is the most advanced in Europe—of exorbitant taxes, of the euthanasia of the rich: it remains, however, quite visibly, the most solid and secure *bourgeoisie* in Europe, which is perhaps not saying a great deal. It is also, like the German middle class, deeply attached to the idea of culture, not as an extension or deepening of consciousness but, in the full sense of that significant word, as a *heritage*: a heritage which implies, like more material patrimonies, duties as well as privileges. A kindly Swedish magnate revealed to me that he was forfeiting an opportunity to go elk-shooting in order to attend a lecture of mine. It was clear from his appearance and style that he was an elk-shooter rather than a Joyce-fan, by disposition, so I remonstrated with him, telling him I did not think he would enjoy the lecture. At the word he stopped me with a stare



of his pale blue eyes: "Thank you. I do not go to lectures in order to *ennyoy* myself."

SUCH experiences—and they are frequent in Sweden—are usually generalized in the form: "The Swedes are a dull race." Irishmen in particular are receptive to this idea: the most stupefying bore in any Dublin bar will wrap himself in the mantles of Sheridan and Congreve, of Wilde and Shaw, while he contemplates the clod-like dullness of the Swede. The judgment is true, to the extent that Swedish conversation, in English, lacks brilliance and agility; foreigners who can achieve these qualities while conversing in the Swedish language have a right to look down on the Swedes. Dullness, in the sense of stupidity, is not a Swedish quality: one meets few Swedes who are not at least shrewd, and I know one Swedish editor whose conversation has something better than the brilliance of Wilde: the force and sense of Dr. Johnson.

Mr. O'Donnell, the author of "Maria Cross," a study of eight modern Catholic writers, has recently lectured in Sweden on English and Irish literature.

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The notorious Dr. Emil Joystone has formulated, in *The Autarkie of Earth* a theory that there are three main sources of illusion—drink, sex and religion—and that no modern community can at present survive without copious supplies of at least two out of the three. "Otherwise," in his view, "a state of illusion-deficiency leads to apathy and even suicide." The Italians, in his view, get along with sex and religion: the Irish with drink and religion: the Swedes with drink and sex. He warns communities "working on an illusion-basis of only two-thirds" of the danger of interfering in any way with "either of the surviving illusion-habitats." He relates, with his usual dubious statistical methodology, the high Swedish suicide rate to the increasingly stringent—and effective—liquor laws, and makes a series of coarse Swabian witticisms about the nature of the thread by which the Swedish people now hang.

Joystone's remarks, absurd and offensive as they invariably are, point the way to a certain reality. What the vulgar think of as dullness among the Swedes is really melancholy: a sort of spiritual deficiency-disease, a polite desperation. Certain lines of Robert Penn Warren come, in Sweden, very easily to the mind.

> Though your luck held and the market was always . . satisfactory,
>
> Though the letter always came and your lovers were always true,
>
> Though you always received the respect due to your position,
>
> Though your hand never failed of its cunning and your glands always thoroughly knew their business,
>
> Though your conscience was easy and you were assured of your innocence,
>
> You became gradually aware that something was missing from the picture,
>
> And upon closer inspection exclaimed: "Why, I'm not in it at all!"
>
> Which was perfectly true.

It is, of course, a condition not peculiar to Sweden; it has been more publicized in other countries, such as France, where it is by no means so visible to the naked eye. Its prevalence in Sweden could be ascribed to various causes, leaving aside the frivolous, if suggestive, theses of Joystone. An Irish friend who lives in Sweden relates it all to "Gustavus-Vasa-and-his-two-wives," a reference to the effigy in Uppsala Cathedral of that monarch, with a wife on each side of him. It is perfectly respectable really, and even creditable, but it lies there, for my friend, as a symbol of Laxity Condoned. This is less plausible, as a cause of melancholy, than the winter or the Russians. Nor do I believe that even these do much more than exacerbate a condition already present.

WHY are Swedes sad? It is an unanswerable question, like that in the footnote to *Finnegan's Wake*: Why have these puerile blondes those large flexible ears? Travelers, like dreamers, answer such questions with impressions. I think of three sober Swedes, met in different places, in whose eyes tears glistened as they spoke of Ireland: a reaction I have never observed in anyone except, oddly enough, a writer from *The New Yorker*. Intense and lengthy arguments on the fundamentals of religion come to mind: a professor, Voltairean in speech but Socratic in mind, famous for graveling the pastors of the Swedish church, admitting his regret that this was so easy to do: a few Catholics—altogether negligible as a proportion of the total population, but not insignificant as a fraction of the intellectuals—comporting themselves like early Christians under the reign of one of the milder pagan Emperors. The professor suggested that conversions, especially among women, were due to the guilt-and-Graham-Greene vogue, lending prestige and complication to sex in the long sub-arctic winters. This is probably true of a few people—one met people to whom the idea of sin seemed to commend itself by its aristocratic distinction—but such oddities are present on the edge of every religious disquiet. The Swedish Catholics I met were mostly, as one would expect, very serious and very well-equipped, with the air of men and women resolutely embarked upon a desperate venture.

Were they, then, no less sad than other Swedes? I think that they were sadder. One cannot proclaim the solution: "The Swedes are sad because they are Protestants," and leave it at that. Yet, on the whole, one cannot help, either, feeling that the clumsy equestrian statue of Gustavus Adolphus at Stockholm has more to do with it than that other Gustavus, connubially snug at Uppsala. Sweden, in the Thirty Years War, did more than any other nation to tear Europe apart. Swedish nationality, the Reformation, the Lion of the North, are intertwined inseparably. Yet Sweden, unlike England, is not to any degree culturally self-sufficient. The Swedes need Europe: they seem less nationalist and more European in feeling than are the other countries of the Continent. Is Swedish melancholy related to a sense of having in some way injured their heritage and disrupted the community to which they naturally belong? That may be a chimerical idea, induced, in my case, by the chance that I came to Sweden immediately after a visit to Rome, and was obsessed throughout the journey by the sense of a basic European dialectic, the attraction and repulsion between the Goths and Latin civilization.

However that may be, Stockholm is full of clubs for friendship to this or that European nation. England, naturally, is the object of greatest affection. Indeed the Swedish love of England—particularly strong

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in Gothenburg and the West—has something touching about it, when one considers how little it is requited: the English man-in-the-street thinks of the Swedes as funny, like other foreigners: the English intellectual dislikes Sweden, Switzerland and all other clean, progressive countries, and reserves his love for Italy, France and—in rare but acute cases—Spain. Sweden will be sadder because Sir Winston cannot find time to come to Stockholm to receive his prize.

IT is only in Southern Europe, among the Latins, that Nordic blondness, Nordic romance and even the solider Nordic qualities, are esteemed. The whole interplay of sympathies reminds one a little of O. Henry's story of the tramp, the political boss, and the aristocrat. The tramp longed to shake hands with the boss: the boss with the aristocrat: and the aristocrat, racked with social guilt, yearned for the company of the tramp. The analogy will serve only just so far: there is no point in trying to identify the tramp or the boss.

The importance of Sweden, and of Swedish melancholy, may well be that Swedes recognize, as other Europeans usually do not, that their country is only a fragment—not in the sense that it has lost some piece of territory, but in the sense that it has been broken off from the greater spiritual whole, with which it must re-establish contact. Here, by the wooden houses among the fir-trees and the lakes, at Sigtuna the old capital, near where in the Middle Ages the religious border ran between Christian and heathen, one feels the impact of the poet's words:

"The Godhead is broken like bread. We are the pieces."

THE STAGE

KIND SIR

ONCE upon a time there were two mummies, Miss Mary Martin and Mr. Charles Boyer. The living had been good for these mummies: it had been *toujours gai* all the time, they were attractive, and their tombs were full of witch's gold. Miss Martin, the mummy of the first part, had washed her hair more often than any other woman (alive or mummy) and that, you must admit, is quite an achievement. Mr. Boyer (mummy of the second part) with rather less hair to wash, had just as frequently brought the female population of the known world to the brink of emotional devastation. But life had grown dull among the hieroglyphics, and one day a wicked Pharaoh, Mr. Joshua Logan, teased them out of obscurity. Would

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Miss Martin like to appear as a glamorous Cleopatra, in lots of lush new winding sheets designed by Main Bocher? Would Mr. Boyer like to add Miss Martin to his list of drawing-room trophies? WOULD THEY!

So the wicked Pharaoh surrounded Mummies I & II with a number of other mummies, all in interesting stages of decay, and displayed this funereal procession in an unused room of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Egyptian Division) decorated by that expert in opulent embalming, Mr. Jo Mielziner. Put this all together, it spells "Kind Sir," a pageant which was unveiled at a local pyramid called the Alvin last week. It did not greatly please the High Priests of Isis and Osiris, but as the Sphinx declared in one of his more lucid moments, turning over that joyous money in his grubby paws, "The box office never lies!"

There are plays so facile and narcotic, so withered and so wild in their attire, that one wonders, quite simply and eloquently, why. Mr. Norman Krasna has swelled their ranks before, and the news this time is, he's done it again. But surely, in that darkened New Haven auditorium, somewhere between the last cup of drugstore coffee and the next Between the Acts cigar, light must have broken, the whole seedy enterprise fallen into a terrible perspective. No matter: "Kind Sir" is quite sufficient to inspire endearing fantasies of dialectical materialism and conspicuous waste, of Thorstein Veblen and a besotted leisure class jogging its way gleefully down Fifty-Second Street. I am reminded that, near the end of the last century, Henry James predicted for the English stage a dour future: "An immense elaboration of the picture, an immense sacrifice of everything else . . . there will be little illustrations of costume stuck about—dressed manikins; but they'll have nothing to say: They won't even go through the form of speech." "Kind Sir" gives that prophecy a kind of hideous transatlantic confirmation but with this grueling difference: the manikins *do* go through the forms of human speech; oh yes—they do, they do. (*At the Alvin.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

WHAT, NO ZITHER!

CAROL Reed always uses cinema intelligently. His last picture, "Outcast of the Islands," in which he tried to simulate the depths of Conrad's meaty prose, was in my estimation one of Reed's few failures; but his new opus, "The Man Between," set in post-war Berlin, is in the fine style of his earlier

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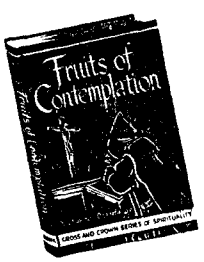

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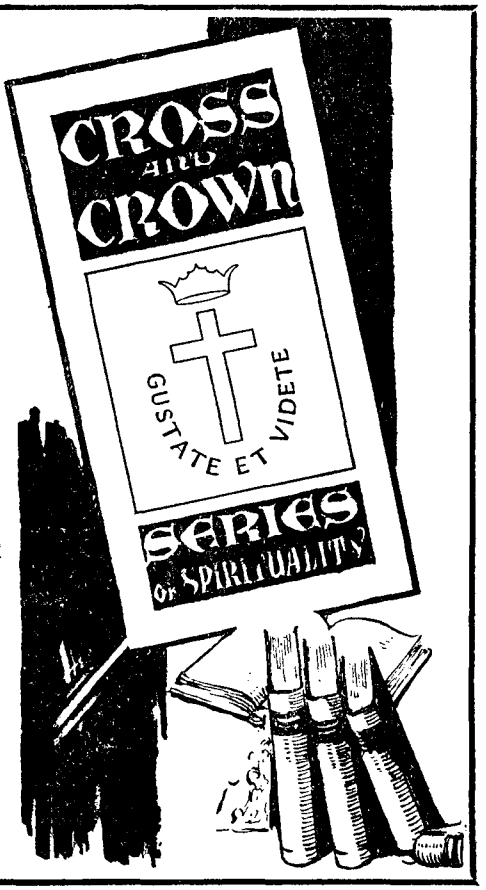

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successes: "Fallen Idol," "The Third Man," "Odd Man Out" and "Night Train."

Suspense and mystery pervade "The Man Between" from the very beginning when lovely Claire Bloom steps off the plane from England and is met by her German sister-in-law (Hildegarde Neff). Hardly does she get to the house, an isolated old mansion standing amidst rubble and ruin in the West Sector of Berlin where her brother (an English army doctor, played by Geoffrey Toone) lives, than Claire realizes all is by no means well with Hildegarde—those strange telephone calls, that unexplained little boy who keeps hanging around on a bicycle, and later that suave German (James Mason) who turns up again and again to add to Hildegarde's nervousness. Berlin, with its ruins and rebuilding efforts covered with snow, with its slick icy streets, with its air of confusion, is as much a part of the plot as the complicated characters themselves. Unfortunately at times Reed expects too much of us: one beautifully photographed scene in which Mason takes Claire to an ice-skating rink furnishes the background for the key explanation of the plot and if you don't listen carefully you'll miss what Mason is up to and why he is working with the Russian-dominated villains.

The screenplay that Harry Kurnitz wrote from a story by Walter Ebert is fascinating, and the film is imaginatively and excitingly directed. "The Man Between" doesn't have any history-making device like the use of the zither throughout "The Third Man" (which put zithers in the running again), but it does have tremendously effective scenes with a monster-like, snow-covered automobile, and at the ornate Berlin opera house where Ljuba Welitsch sings "Salome" while sinister conniving goes on. "The Man Between" is a thriller for adults that ends as it must on a grim note after it gets itself into an irresolvable plot triangle.

ANYONE who doubts that the movies are a director's art should see "Cease Fire," a Hal Wallis production that was photographed on the battlefields of Korea in cooperation with the Department of Defense. Its director, Owen Crump, who wrote the story from which Walter Doniger wrote the screenplay, used a group of real GIs in Korea as non-professional actors to show what might happen to a patrol on the last day of the war.

There is no big heroic stuff in "Cease Fire," no glamor boys wipe out whole regiments, no typical cross-section of American virility in action; but there is heroism and there is plenty of action showing how well-trained men carry out a dangerous mission under fire. "Cease Fire" is an effective war film, and is one of the finest examples of a film in 3D to date.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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The Museum Without Walls

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

ACCORDING to legend, a dying man relives the events of his life in his imagination. This legend could represent one of the underlying themes in André Malraux's new, and profound, book, *The Voices of Silence* [Doubleday, $25.]: that modern art discovered the past at the very moment it became separated from the present. "Dying" is perhaps too strong a word to use for that alienation of art from society which Malraux describes, yet it is implied in his analysis for he sees the relation of art and today's industrial society as differing radically from any relation of art and society in the past.

Malraux points out that a changing technology has made more of the plastic past available, and that an individualistic art which is part of the same process has provided the aesthetic basis for the appreciation of different periods and styles. Thus the plurality of contemporary forms has opened up the way to the plurality of historical forms, but this historical insight has been accomplished by a modern art alienated from its own time.

The first point is technological. For a long time, essays were written on how the whiteness of Greek statuary characterized the spirit of Greek civilization: it was a "white" culture—pure, classic, timeless. But then science discovered the fact that Greek statues were often painted—sometimes the eyeballs were a bright red. The simple technical ability to arrive at this fact forced a complete re-evaluation, not only of Greek sculpture, but of the Greek society which it supposedly symbolized.

Or to cite another example: Negro art has had a tremendous effect on the twentieth century. If its influence had been confined to Picasso alone, it would still be of great significance, but it has been, of course, far more pervasive. This art, that might have been considered barbarian a hundred years ago, is now understood to speak of values which are directly relevant to our own time.

Yet the full impact of this technological revolution—of the availability of much more art from the past—would not have been felt if there had not been a historic change in attitude in the way in which the past is viewed.

Mr. Harrington writes frequently on literary and political matters for The Commonweal and other magazines.

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THE nineteenth century critic felt that art was a progress. The reason that the Gothic sculptor did not create a classic statue was that he could not. Renaissance art and the subsequent development of perspective, chiaroscuro and the like, was an "absolute" advance over the past. Involved in these beliefs was an underlying concept of some timeless style which was "correct" and toward which art "advanced."

Scientific developments alone could not change this concept. If it had persisted, the past which was being uncovered by modern technology would have been viewed as merely primitive—and dismissed as such. But simultaneous with modern technological development there occurred a profound change in art itself.

Before the industrial revolution, the artist had been related to either the people in primitive societies, or to the ruling class. But when the hierarchy of Empire was destroyed, it was not replaced by the announced egalitarianism of Revolution. The triumphant middle class expressed no coherent *social* value. It stood for a kind of practical anarchism in all but private property —in Lasalle's phrase, for the state as a nightwatchman. The consequences of this change for the artist were profound.

Malraux describes its result: "The reason why the relations between the nineteenth century artist and the bourgeois of the period of Louis Philippe were so different from those between the artist of an earlier age and (for example) the Dutch sea rovers, the Medicean middle class, or that of the Flemish cities, was that the earlier middle-classes belong to a coherent world, whereas the world of the nineteenth century bourgeois was a disrupted world."

Given a situation in which the ruling class no longer expressed a social coherence and in which the people, the "folk," had become literate but in the attendant urbanization had lost their illiterate, and profound, culture, the artist had nowhere to turn but to himself. For the first time in history, then, he began to paint, not for the people, not under the sponsorship of the ruling class, but for his fellow artists only.

The consequence of this for modern culture was the emergence of a highly individualistic art, a tremendous flowering of form, of inventiveness and experimentation. Negatively, this emergence expressed alienation—the artist without religious or social function—but positively, it affirmed a magnificent artistic freedom.

It was this new kind of art that coincided with the new technological progress. And, in Malraux's terms, precisely because it was so individualistic, so teeming with forms, it could value all of the different arts of the past, not for harmony with some timeless, and non-existent, Style, but for what they actually set out to do and for what they accomplished. The Gothic

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sculptor was no longer dismissed because he was not Classic—he was valued because he was Gothic. Rather than criticize the artist of Constantinople for not having worked as if he were from Athens, modern art realized that "as much genius was needed to obliterate man at Byzantium as had been needed to discover him on the Acropolis."

Yet implicit within this modern recognition of the value of the past there has been still another profound realization: that art speaks a proper language essential to itself. For if the modern, agnostic artist can find a kinship with a sorrowing Virgin and an enigmatically smiling Buddha, what unites him to them is not the literal content of Christianity or Buddhism, but rather an artistic language common to every culture.

Thus, form has been freed from subordination to explicit content. But the price of this liberation is that modern art has come perilously close to making form its only meaning.

THERE is a kinship, a unity of the arts, but it is not merely formal, in the strict sense of the word. It is not a case of the modern artist recognizing certain geometric similarities between the Buddha and the Virgin. Rather, it is a realization that the entire history of art is a vast metamorphosis in which the past is always becoming, and influencing, the present. This comes about in two ways: through actual encounter, and through a common impulse.

The metamorphosis of actual encounter is seen clearly, for example, in the history of the Macedonian coin of Philip. This one coin, with its particular face, was the basis of a whole series of coins, traveling throughout Europe. There was always a similarity in the coins, proceeding from their common origin. Yet each group of artists changed the common image in their own way, according to their own style, and the coins also demonstrate a vast difference. The original underwent a metamorphosis each time it encountered a new style. It was transmuted, according to the particular genius of the artist who worked upon it, into something distinctively new, yet it always bore a relation to the past.

But even more important than this metamorphosis of actual encounter is the unity of art in its common impulse. The West had never actually "met" the fetish until late in its history. It would be difficult to speak here of "influences." Yet the Western artist can see in the fetish a use of his own language and an attempt at expressing certain values. Although there had been no actual encounter, the same forces, the language and impulse of art, have worked upon both.

Malraux, like Albert Camus, would describe this

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common impulse in fundamentally spiritual terms—as a revolt against man's fate. For the artist attempts to transcend the world, to give it a meaning, wherever he may be. He does this through his own language: that of art. There are many forms, but one purpose: an assertion of the spiritual nature of man in the face of a philistine world.

Malraux describes our knowledge of art: a language undergoing constant metamorphosis, a dialogue of past and present, a vast continuum—in his term, a Museum without Walls. It waited upon the technological discovery of our time, and our individualistic art and aesthetics, for this communion to be realized. But the price of such knowledge? Malraux writes: "The Chinese figures hewn into the rock-face, of Angkor and Elephanta, no less than the painters of Villeneuve Pieta and the Nara frescoes, and later Michelangelo, Titian, Rubens and Rembrandt, linked men up with their universe; as did even Goya, flinging them his gift of darkness. As for the art of today, does it not tend to bring to men only that scission of the consciousness whence it took rise?"

Here is the other side of the coin. It has taken an art alienated from its society, individualistic, the product of a fragmented civilization, to make the discovery. Is the price of this vivid awareness death? Paradoxically, has art discovered the community of itself at that very moment when an industrial culture destroys that community?

Malraux suggests the question, but he does not try to answer it. Indeed he cannot, for he is critic, not prophet. Yet the very asking of such a question is disturbing. And though we may well rejoice in the continuity we have discovered with the past, we must fear the continuity which our arts maintain in the present, and to the future. Perhaps the concept of the Bauhaus, the group of post-World War I artists who attempted to fashion an aesthetic expression of industrial culture, will prevail. Perhaps it will be the consumption aesthetic of modern advertising in which beauty and design are exploited rather than expressed.

There remains the very accomplishment of modern art. Toynbee asks: have we "wilfully cast out of our souls the great masters who have been the familiar spirits of our forefathers?" Malraux answers, No.

The modern artist is indeed alienated from his society, and that is tragic. It is also not his fault. But far from wilfully casting out the "familiar spirits of our forefathers," he has remained true to the language of art and in the process seen the value and common impulse of Byzantium and Africa, of the Gothic and the Buddhist. In this fragmented age, Malraux asserts, it is precisely the artist who asserts the claim of the spirit as against that of the commodity, who affirms the heritage, not only of the West, but of the world—of the Museum without Walls.

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The Movement Toward Fulfillment

BROTHER TO DRAGONS. By Robert Penn Warren. Random House. $3.50.

By NICHOLAS JOOST

THE most remarkable talent now active in American letters continues to widen, to deepen, its area of achieved brilliance. Novelist, poet, playwright, critic, anthologist, teacher: Robert Penn Warren before the age of fifty has proved himself a major figure in varied fields. His accomplishment as a novelist needs no pointing up. His anthologies, compiled with Cleanth Brooks, account for the invasion of the New Criticism into practically every department of English in the country. His Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *All the King's Men,* was originally written as a play; and he teaches today in the Drama School at Yale.

Mr. Warren first became known, however, as a poet, a member of the *Fugitive* group of agrarians and literary men and teachers at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and his interest, whether creative or critical, in poetry has remained central to his career.

Now his first major poetical production in a decade has appeared. This long narrative poem, *Brother to Dragons: A Tale in Verse and Voices,* exhibits the poet's three principal preoccupations: a return to a conservatism that we may term, in a rather broad sense, Christian; the exploration of the possibilities of narrative verse technique; and the history of his native Kentucky. In no other work except perhaps *The Ballad of Billie Potts*—and that, of course, is much slighter in scale than *Brother to Dragons*—have these three preoccupations previously coalesced.

Kentucky history, as told in Mr. Warren's novels and poems, is a continuation of the history of the Indians' bloody ground, that scene "filled with the ghosts of its slaughtered inhabitants." In such works as *Night Rider, World Enough and Time,* and *The Ballad of Billie Potts* Kentucky has seemed a breeding ground for bloodshed, but *Brother to Dragons* outdoes all these, if not in quantity, at least in intensity, of violence.

Its story has to do with the Kentucky relations of Thomas Jefferson, the Lewises, his sister Lucy's husband and two sons, Lilburn and Isham. On the evening of December 15, 1811, just prior to the terrible earthquake famous in history, Lilburn Lewis, abetted by Isham, chopped to death his body servant George before the assembled slaves of the Lewis plantation, because George had broken a pitcher that had belonged to the deceased Lucy Jefferson Lewis. The murder was of course discovered in time, and Lilburn Lewis induced the younger brother to kill him in a suicide pact, which Isham alone kept. Brought to jail for this alleged crime, Isham escaped, fought in the War of 1812, and died in the Battle of New Orleans. Human justice in this case utterly failed.

The subplot of *Brother to Dragons* concerns Meriwether Lewis, of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Jefferson had trained Meriwether Lewis in his own tradition—which Mr. Warren regards as a tradition of unrealistic optimism. When Meriwether Lewis as Governor of Louisiana Territory finds himself falsely accused of malfeasance in office, his faith in man's innate goodness and perfectibility crumbles, and he despairingly commits suicide. His part of the narrative, then, contrasts with that of his cousins. He has been as much too superior in virtue to society as they have been depraved.

The disembodied voices of all concerned in the tale speak in elastic and superbly handled modifications of blank verse—pure, rhymed, or free, as occasion demands. Mr. Warren himself appears throughout as the *raisonneur,* talking with Jefferson and his relatives to try, as he says in his foreword, "to make sense of that action" the issue of which is in his view "a human constant."

This issue is the problem whether man is innately good, innately depraved, or innately good and yet somehow depraved to a degree that

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differs tremendously with each person. Jefferson here has reacted violently against his optimistic deism. He regards man as capable of any bestiality, as being in fact viler than beasts. His despair results not only from the spectacle of Lilburn's crime but also from the reproaches of Meriwether Lewis, who discovered too late the tragic extent of his own infatuation with a misconception of man's nature. Should we share Jefferson's attitude? How are we to react to a world that hounds the good and that blunderingly loses the murderer, that acquiesces in the most horrible evil and that casts out the innocent?

We must argue the necessity of virtue, Mr. Warren answers; and the beginning of virtue and the death of vanity come with the movement toward fulfillment. "Fulfillment is only in the degree of recognition. Of the common lot of our kind":

The recognition of complicity
is the beginning of innocence.
The recognition of necessity is
the beginning of freedom.
The recognition of the direction
of fulfillment is the death of
the self,
And the death of the self is
the beginning of selfhood.
All else is surrogate of hope
and destitution of spirit.

E'n la sua voluntate è nostra pace. Mr. Warren echoes Dante, and for the first time in his art he escapes that murkiness, that despair of man, which he now regards as Jefferson's despair.

A Civilization

THE HILL OF DEVI. E. M. Forster. Harcourt, Brace. $4.

By ANNE FREMANTLE

"I must, however, see about those coconuts. . . . Hoping to have caught the spirit of Dassera, I . . . offered one to the tennis court, and another to the Guest House, but no, wrong again. The tennis court and the Guest house never pray to coconuts." This is not jabberwocky, nor is it taken from a letter from Alice to the White Queen, but from one written by E. M. Forster to his mother during his second visit to the princely Indian state of Dewas Senior. *The Hill of Devi* is made up of "letters home," a first batch written during 1912-13, on Mr. Forster's first visit, the majority during his second, sixth months in 1921 when he was the Maharajah's private secretary. Between the two series he gives a description of the State and its ruler; after the letters comes a description of the deluge—a catastrophe on a Mahabharatic scale, which swept away the Maharajah, his State, and the occupying Power.

"A bright and tiny Indian." So His Highness, Bapu Sahib, appeared to Mr. Forster on Christmas Day, 1912, when he first saw him, composing an enormous telegram of sympathy, loyalty and congratulation to the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, on his escape from assassination. In Mr. Forster's first letter, there are political undertones. But the book becomes progressively less political. Mr. Forster sees non-political men as Aristotle saw them, as neither beasts nor Gods.

Generally as both. The astonishing achievement of this *décousu,* haphazard-seeming book, a *collage* indeed rather than a story, is the 3D effect it continuously gives. If the recording of an enchephalaogram is watched, the ticker-tape squibbles along fairly evenly, and then suddenly, there is a vertical moment, before the horizontal tendency reasserts itself. Mr. Forster produces a simultaneity of horizontal and vertical which is quite miraculous, and which only he himself could describe and account for, as he has in his *Aspects of the Novel,* when he notes how a story gets away from writer or reader, and suddenly, like a bird, is high and far beyond, leaving, perhaps, the shadow of its wings on earth or cloud.

So in this inconsequential, chatty account of daily life in Dewas. The

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ugliness is omnipresent. Nothing in Dewas was lovely, not the mediocre, colorless landscape, burnt brown except for a brief moment after the monsoon, not the hideous buildings, not the Hill of Devi itself, except when crowded by worshippers in gay saris on a feast day, going up to worship the goddess (the least unattractive of seven sisters, but still not anyone one would care to meet alone on a dark night). Even the festivals were shoddy and aesthetically disappointing: in the long account of Gokul Ashtami, the eight days rejoicing to celebrate the birth of Krishna, "there is no dignity, no taste, no form. . . ." Yet, amongst all the "bogey-bogey" there are sudden heights: a preacher explains what the various groups are singing, how some praise God without attributes, others with attributes; and "the expressions of most people were beautiful that day."

There are very funny incidents, such as the Insult, when a visiting British Civil Servant failed to offer Mr. Forster pan and itr, and the repercussions resounded at the vice-regal level. There are wonderful escapes from Dewas too, as was Mr. Forster's visit to Bunkelkhand, which restores his faith in the beauty of India and its architecture; a lovely and lyrical interlude, exquisitely described, of a city hidden away among jungles, with hills and scampering monkeys, black-faced because they had not helped Rama in his wars.

It is doubtful whether ever again an Englishman will so well understand India. Today the distances are too great, and there is nothing to bridge them. For India's captivity was also a form of communication, and the Paramount Power had a real relationship with India like that of Agamemnon to Cassandra, or Creusa to her conqueror, which was none the less valid for being vile. Today, even war does not bring people together: Mussolini's sons bombing the Ethiopians from alien skies felt nothing, saw nothing, except the pretty red spurts the blood made on the dusty earth. Nor has Hiroshima taught us Japanese, as at least the long Maharatta Wars taught the British redcoats a dozen Indian languages, and paved the way for the flurry of nineteenth century translations of all the Hindu scriptures.

Mr. Forster has absolute pitch, that rarest of all gifts, and he can see the infinite complexity of a few Indians, although still consciously belonging to a race many, many thousands of years younger and more naive. The Rajputs, of whom Bapu Sahib was one, are probably the most highly complicated and civilized of human beings, almost volatized by countless generations of inbreeding and civilization, refracting kaleidoscopically the intense light of our one aged sun.

Bapu Sahib's civilization and his awareness are separated from ours by the great chasm of the Fall. For the Hindu, the apprehension of godhead is immediate, worshipped in, and as, anything and everything. "I had to act the priest twice. It was enjoyable. The first time I adored a pen, an inkpot, a wastepaper basket and a piece of foolscap. One hasn't to say anything, still less to

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feel. Just wave incense and sprinkle water" writes Mr. Forster, yet even he, when he reaches the Taj Mahal, gives a monotheist sigh of almost relief "There is no God but God." "I do like Islam . . . after all the mess and profusion and confusion, . . . it was like standing on a mountain."

The last tragic scenes of the life of the self-exiled, ruined, disgraced Maharajah are illuminated not only by Mr. Forster's compassion and devotion, but also by Bapu Sahib's own hope "that we should all be recalled to the attention of God."

Final Wisdom

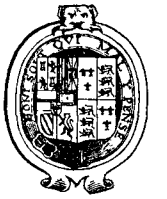
EXCEPT THE LORD. By Joyce Cary. Harper. $3.50.

By DORIS GRUMBACH

WHAT is it precisely that makes reading Joyce Cary such a joyful experience? He is a "master of characterization"—he writes with "robust reality"—"a virtuoso of prose narrative"—the critics have been almost beside themselves as each of his eight volumes appeared in this country. But his formula is hard to put down: the exact proportions of seemingly subcutaneous understanding, social and political satire of the most delicate sort, humane, graceful yet aculeated wit, deep and still undogmatic piety—all these contribute to his art and still do not constitute the whole.

Perhaps this is because he is a master of the moment of epiphany, that flash of revelation and insight into human motives and character that fixes them forever in the memory and compels an identification with some aspect of oneself or one's experience. His novels are beyond the easy canons of ordinary criticism. They defy the catalog and his characters violate all pigeonholes. He writes with a greyhound's easy movement, far beyond the usual techniques of narrative; his style defies and transcends analysis.

His latest novel, *Except the Lord,* is concerned with Chester Nimmo's first thirty years of life, before the events recounted in *Prisoner of*



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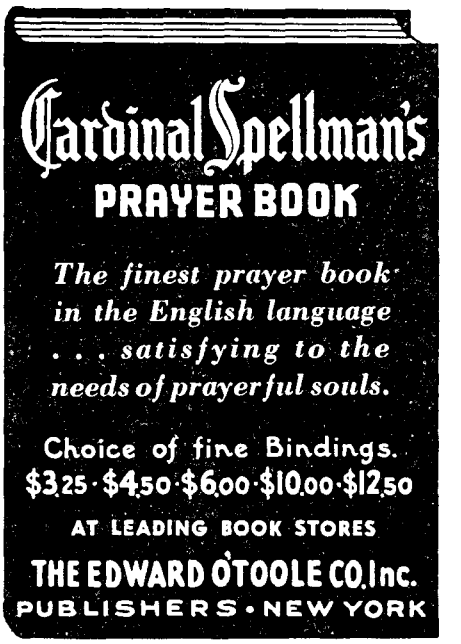
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Grace, in which he served merely as the bare armature for the elaborate characters of Nina and Jim Lattner. Chester Nimmo emerged from that earlier book a scarecrow of a man, despised, successful, perverse and full of peculiar rages, revenges and religious enthusiasms. We knew him not at all, we now discover, or we knew only the sight of him allowed to pass through the delusioned eyes of his wife.

Now Nimmo tells his story himself. The stick-figure of the successful politician, cabinet minister and powerful leader and mover of men is clothed with the sensitive flesh of the poverty-stricken child of an Adventist preacher. We watch him grow up in want and perplexity, lose faith in the stringencies of an absolute and unbending sect, gain love and understanding of his difficult father and sister, and slowly, like most adolescent youth of value, try out all the political and intellectual rebellions of his age.

He becomes a union organizer at a time (the early 1870's) when it often meant a cracked cranium at the very least; he revolts against his father's forbidding God in order to revel in the easy promises of Marx ("The turbulence and egoism of youth—is it not too often merely the need of a worthy cause to absorb the first violence of a responsive will?") and returns at the beginning of his manhood to the ruined remains of his family, all of whom are tragically dying, deserted or disillusioned. At this hour he comprehends "the uniqueness of God" and reconciles his errant will to His decision. He hears and this time understands the basis of his father's serene faith and self-forgetfulness: "Except the Lord build the house, their labor is but lost that build it . . ."

Nimmo descends to the depths of emotional, intellectual and physical life and climbs back again. His journey is full of a reality in which ordinary humans can believe; his end is part of a recognition in which we, as humans burdened with a great number of the more unspectacular sins, can luxuriate. When he arrives at it he can say: "I grasped the full significance of that profoundest of truths . . . that unless [a man] aim at the life of the soul then all his achievement will be a gaol or a mad-house, self-hatred, corruption, and despair."

REVIEWERS

Nicholas Joost is the acting editor of *Poetry* magazine.

Doris Grumbach reviews frequently for The Commonweal.

Geoffrey Ashe writes for journals in both England and the United States.

Jean Holzhauer is a regular contributor to this magazine.

Walter Kerr is the drama critic of the New York *Herald Tribune*.

John A. Lukacs' book, *The Great Powers and Eastern Europe*, has recently been published.

Marshall McLuhan, the author of *The Mechanical Bride*, teaches at the University of Toronto.

Patrick F. Quinn is a member of the department of English at Wellesley College.

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Critics' Choice for Christmas

GEOFFREY ASHE

RATHER than attempt a broad survey beyond my competence, I have chosen four books on the basis of a single special merit they have in common. They all give spectacular insights into modern society. The reader gets really new ideas as to what the leaders of capitalism are doing, what the workers are doing, what happens when the Marxist analysis is translated into practice, and where the whole system may be going. (Two of these books, I think, were published last year, but didn't get around much till '53.)

Is Anybody Listening. By William H. Whyte, Jr. Simon and Schuster. $3. A very funny, very deadly indictment of the orgy of organized mediocrity which too many businessmen are equating with progress.

The Making of a Moron. By Niall Brennan. Sheed & Ward. $2.50. The resurrection and first-hand verification of some carefully neglected findings in industrial psychology, which explode certain fashionable myths about workers.

A Window on Red Square. By Frank Rounds, Jr. Houghton Mifflin. $3. The first post-1945 "Truth about Russia" book which has given me the impression of containing the truth about Russia.

Limbo. By Bernard Wolfe. Random House. $3.50. Science-fiction on a vast scale by a writer of commanding attainments, both technological and literary—a rare combination. Exhilarating beyond words.

PHILIP BURNHAM

SAINT Bernard of Clairvaux: Seen Through His Selected Letters. Regnery. $3.50; The Letters of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. Regnery. $10. Both volumes translated by Father Bruno Scott James. Saint Bernard was the prophet and usher of the High Middle Ages. If he was not a genius, a great man, and a most true saint, then, indeed, the whole medieval period was a dark age, monasticism a failure, and the very concept of Europe and Christendom a delusion. His letters are perhaps a small part of the whole man, and of the immense literature which his contemporaries and followers built around him; but they reflect clearly: Bernard was a genius, a great man, a saint.

A Treasury of Early Christianity. Edited by Anne Fremantle. Viking. $6. Anne Fremantle has prepared a still earlier and more pristine testament of Christianity. This compact volume embraces a wonderful portion of the truth and vitality and the overwhelming personality of the Church Fathers. These are really great men of old, who lived through the disastrous, declining years of disappearing empire . . . building the structure of the history to come.

The Spirit of St. Louis. By Charles A. Lindbergh. Scribners. $5. This is a clear, disciplined story of action. It contains, as an inevitable inner content, reflection—never high-flown or distracting—upon the action, on its human and material agents, and upon its immense setting. The direct, "seeing" narrative is worthy of the famous accomplishments of the flyer. The book goes well with his rare and intriguing character, and his place in American life and legend.

Simple Takes a Wife. By Langston Hughes. Simon and Schuster. $1.95. Jess Simple is a thoroughly aware, reasonably educated, but resolutely free Negro. He balances delicately, but one hundred per cent confidently, between hearty adjustment and hearty disadjustment to a world which neither he nor his race ever made—except, to be sure, for marvelously vivid sections of upper Manhattan Island and their extensions into the cosmopolitan countryside. Jess Simple came to Harlem, U.S.A. from back home in Virginia, Dixie: a country he knocks with vehemence which only deep and loving nostalgia could create. Jess knows he likes Harlem. *Simple Takes a Wife* is the second poetic and sympathetic and funny and realistic chronicle of the lives and conversations of Simple, taken from Langston Hughes' column in the Chicago *Defender*. If your neighbor hasn't yet made this friend, now is a good time.

With the Bible Through the Church Year. Pantheon. $4.95. Pantheon provides a specially handsome and useful book to mark a year which has certainly been remarkable for re-doing the Bible. Without affectation, or condescension, or striving for effect, the Bible stories are retold (for young and old), and arranged within the framework of the liturgical year. Brothers of the Benedictine Order have edited the work and illustrated it in color. Mary Perkins has written prefaces for the seasons and for many feasts. It helps in practical and pleasing ways to keep one in touch; and adorns mind as well as mantel.

WILLIAM P. CLANCY

IN choosing the five most "valuable" books I have read in 1953 no fiction title occurs to me. This may, of course, reflect only on my own reading, but I suspect that it reflects something more—a present poverty of really first-rate fiction. There is no poverty of first-rate non-fiction, however, and the following choices are but a few of the many excellent non-fiction titles which I could name.

The Captive Mind. By Czeslaw Milosz. Knopf. $3.50. The fact that this remarkable book has had a poor sale seems tragic. A brilliant examination of the plight of the intellectual behind the Iron Curtain, it is one of the most sensitive, moving, meaningful and relevant books I have read in a very long time.

The Conservative Mind. By Russell Kirk. Regnery. $6.50. Another "mind"—but the antithesis of that described by Mr. Milosz. This study of the Conservative tradition, from Burke to Santayana, is more than a scholar's exercise; it is a recovery of value and a basis for political re-examination.

Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry. By Jacques Maritain. Pantheon. $6.50. The crowning achieve-

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ment of a great philosopher's long affinity for The Beautiful. What was begun in *Art and Scholasticism* is here brought to rich fruition. This may well be one of the most profound volumes on aesthetics published in our time.

Lord Acton: A Study in Conscience and Politics. By Gertrude Himmelfarb. University of Chicago. $3.75. Acton has been re-discovered, and his career has much to teach us. Miss Himmelfarb's study of this great man would be a model biography in any year.

Collected Poems (1934-1953). By Dylan Thomas. New Directions. $3.75. This volume, published in March, should make us even more aware than we would otherwise have been of how much we lost in Thomas' recent death. He was a great and a rare poet—and his work will surely live.

ANNE FREMANTLE

THE Passionate Heart. By Beatrix Beck. Messner. $3.50. This story of a conversion seemed to me admirable in the strength and delicacy with which it distinguished between God and all that is not Him.

The Quest. By Elizabeth Langgaesser. Knopf. $4. This modern Pilgrims Progress, from bombed-out Berlin to the contemplative nunnery of Anastasiendorf, by seven assorted men and women, is true on many levels, and wonderfully written.

Too Late the Phalarope. By Alan Paton. Scribners. $3.50. A compassionate study of a sick society.

The Hill of Devi. By E. M. Forster. Harcourt, Brace. $4. Mr. Forster's distillation of emotions experienced, digested and recollected in tranquillity.

The Treasures of Darkness. By Cornelia Jessey. Noonday. $3.50. A profound and uncomforting study of an American family and of the contagiousness of evil.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

FROM Lenin to Malenkov. By Hugh Seton-Watson. Praeger. $6. I disagree with the author's political position, but he has brilliantly

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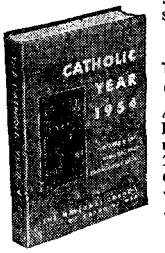

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amassed the data indispensable for the understanding of international Stalinism.

The Seventeenth Century Background. By Basil Willey. Doubleday-Anchor. 85c. I would include this edition as a nomination for the whole Anchor list which has made the work of Riesman, Wilson, and others, available at a low cost.

The Adventures of Augie March. By Saul Bellow. Viking. $4.50. Best American novel I have read in recent years.

The Retreat. By P. H. Newby. Knopf. $3. A little appreciated, but really excellent, novel.

The Voices of Silence. By André Malraux. Doubleday. $25. For just a few of my many reasons, see my article on Malraux in this issue.

JEAN HOLZHAUER

THE Spirit of St. Louis. By Charles A. Lindbergh. Scribners. $5. The personal account of one of the most imaginative exploits of our time, by a fascinating and enigmatic personality.

Collected Poems (1934-1953). By Dylan Thomas. New Directions. $3.75. This collection, brought out before the poet's death, represents one of the really remarkable poetic achievements of the present day.

Annapurna. By Maurice Herzog. Dutton. $5. A combination of personal experience, natural science and philosophy, which in several ways seems uniquely contemporary.

The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry. By Harry Stack Sullivan. Norton. $5. The first editorial effort to organize the theories of a man quite possibly the greatest American psychiatric theoretician.

Boswell on the Grand Tour. Edited by Frederick Pottle. McGraw-Hill. $5. As successive volumes of the Boswell Journals appear, they come to seem rather a muchness—but it is hard to be really tired of this calculatively candid gossip.

NICHOLAS JOOST

WHAT are, you inquire, the five "best" or "most significant" books of 1953? Not being a

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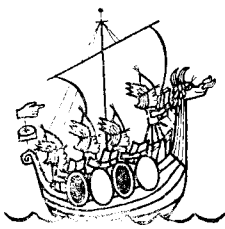

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Renaissance man, I can't honestly answer such an awesome question. Let me rephrase it to fit my own limited view: what five books published this year have I found most helpful?

Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry. By Jacques Maritain. Pantheon. $6.50. Despite the difficult, indeed occasionally opaque, style, this seemed to me to give for our day an admirable aesthetic synthesis and some true answers to basic problems of poetics—and of the poet himself. It is also a beautiful and wise and humane document in its own right, as well as being the one indisputably major treatise in Scholastic aesthetics.

Beyond Criticism. By Karl Shapiro. University of Nebraska. $3. This book is very simply written, in contrast to Maritain's. It is not a systematic aesthetics; yet it convinces, with its own quiet force of conviction, and it does help illuminate and make clear several areas dealt with by Maritain. It has seemed to me that it and *Creative Intuition* are complementary.

Brother to Dragons. By Robert Penn Warren. Random House $3.50. I say in this issue most of the undetailed, non-technical things I wanted to say about this long narrative poem. At a second glance, I'd like to modify my praise to note that when the poem does fail, it fails because Mr. Warren preaches, becomes, I regret to say, pretentious, and fails to allow his powerful and moving metaphors to speak for themselves without intervention. Mr. Warren is most effective when he avoids the Eliotean manner of *Four Quartets.*

Chapbook No. 3 of the *Beloit Poetry Journal.* The brief volume contains poems and self-criticism by three young poets: Galway Kinnell, Anthony Ostroff, and Winfield Townley Scott. Each man explains, in an essay introductory to his own poems, his point of view towards his art: Kinnell the articulate and hardheaded Aristotelian; Ostroff the fervent and solipsistic neo-Kierkegaardean: and Scott the totally unsystematic, unbuttoned pragmatist about his work. The poems here are very interesting, but what makes

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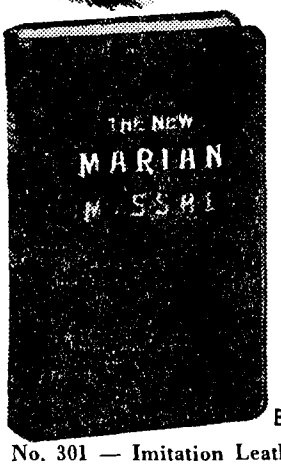

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the volume especially fascinating is its really quite schematic contrasting of the poets' attitudes toward a common problem, with the poems themselves as the evidence, the solution.

The Adventures of Augie March. By Saul Bellow. Viking. $4.50. Full of faults, maddening in places as this novel is, it does have authenticity and reverence. It also has the most highly individuated, the most fully realized prose style of any American novel, on its large scale, of 1953. It is the most revealing book about Chicago since the Studs Lonigan series; and structurally it is that rather rare phenomenon, an American picaresque novel.

So here are my choices: no politics, no history (as such), no social studies (as such, again). Just *belles lettres.*

WALTER KERR

SOME of the books I've been most grateful for over the past year, not all of them new:

The Gide-Claudel Letters. Pantheon. $4. Twice fascinating: because two interesting minds clash openly on matters of importance; and because the sequence has a natural dramatic structure.

Charles Dickens. By Edgar Johnson. Simon and Schuster. $10. As a critic, Mr. Johnson has a strong sociological bias, and I find myself arguing with a view which pushes the *Dombey-Rudge-Hard Times* vein into top position among the novels. But the biography is absorbing, astonishingly so in view of its exhaustive detail.

He That Plays the King. By Kenneth Tynan. Longmans. $2.75. This collection of dramatic criticism was published in 1950, but I didn't run across it till this year. Tynan is, I believe, the youngest of British reviewers, and he's a very stimulating man on the subject of large-scale performances.

The Sign of Jonas. By Thomas Merton. Harcourt, Brace. $3.50. The first half of the book seems to me really to deserve that sticky adjective 'exalting.' As a piece of writing, I suppose it can't help but disintegrate during the author's own

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kind of 'dark night.' But I found *The Sign of Jonas* as moving as *The Seven Storey Mountain,* and more generous.

On the lighter and/or theatrical side, I had a good time with Christopher Fry's small volume, *An Experience of Critics* [*Oxford. $2.25*]; with Lloyd Morris' account of the American star system, *Curtain Time* [*Random House $5.*]; and—about as light as you can get—with the Wodehouse-Bolton *Bring on the Girls* [*Simon and Schuster. $3.95*] which tells some very funny stories about musical-comedy life in the Twenties and Thirties. Among detective stories, Josephine Tey's posthumous *Singing Sands* [*Macmillan. $2.75.*] seemed to me first-rate.

JOHN A. LUKACS

MY selection is guided by the sole principle of what I consider to be of enduring value. I am listing four books which I read, and which were published in 1953, and which, in my opinion, contain a message and meaning that are not ephemeral. All four books are, in the true sense of the phrase, conservative books. This is symptomatic. In this mixed age of glib flash and dreary confusion, they point at ancient truths, and they warn us against the prospects of a future that should completely forget and neglect good and wise traditions. Two profound expositions of this theme are given by two young American scholars: *The Conservative Mind. By Russell Kirk. Regnery. $6.50.,* and *The Quest for Community. By Robert A. Nisbet. Oxford. $5.*

Two British authors describe the lives of two decent men whose lifespans were darkened by the growing smog of public and moral decay. Here, however, biography serves but as a medium for the sake of exposing deep lessons to all of us: *George V. His Life and Reign. By Sir Harold Nicolson. Doubleday. $7.50.,* and *The Forsaken Idea. A Study of Viscount Milner. By Edward Crankshaw. Longmans. $3.25.*

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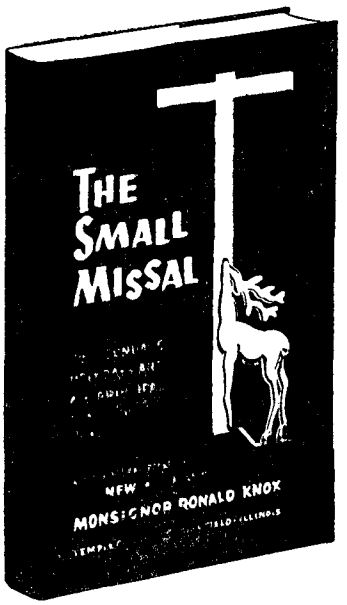

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AN INTEREST IN POLITICS

Meaning, rather than reportage, is the focus of The Commonweal. This magazine deals with the ideas involved in political matters. The people who received Commonweal Christmas Gift Subcriptions last year read such political articles as these: Hannah Arendt's "The Ex-Communists," George N. Shuster's "Academic Freedom," Bishop John J. Wright's "After the Brave New World," Jerome G. Kerwin's "Fear and Freedom," Peter F. Drucker's "The Meaning of Mass Production," Evelyn Waugh's "The Voice of Tito," and Michael Harrington's "Silence on the Left."

Those were some of the feature articles; there were also the informed foreign dispatches of Gunnar D. Kumlien, Robert Barrat, Michael P. Fogarty and others, and the Commonweal's notable editorial analyses of national and international happenings.

In brief, The Commonweal is a provocative and meaningful Christmas gift for any relative or friend who has a more than passing interest in the political affairs of our time.

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perhaps does not belong in a Christmas book list, I feel that I should be remiss in my duties as a critic if I failed to remind readers of that terse, manly, and courageous address given by Mr. George Kennan at the University of Notre Dame on May 13th, 1953, and which, in my opinion, is the best, and noblest example of American public prose since the Gettysburg Address.

MARSHALL McLUHAN

THERE were over eighteen thousand new titles in England alone last year. Nearly twelve thousand in the United States. But of communication between writers and public, there is less and less. Perhaps anticipating this impasse the fox-hunting Duke of Gloucester said to Edward Gibbon on the publication of his *History*: "Another damned, fat square book. Scribble, scribble, scribble, eh, Mr. Gibbon!"

Five notable books that come to my mind as published and read in 1953 are:

The Heart of the City. Jacqueline Tyrwhitt. Farrar, Straus & Young. $10.50. A study of those spots in a city where the pedestrian and spectator are dominant. The author and her collaborators give us a new language for visual analysis and awareness. A means of discovering and using the poetics of urban space.

Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry. By Jacques Maritain. Pantheon. $6.50. Here Maritain strives to unify the complex esthetic speculations and achievements of the past seventy-five years.

A Hopkins Reader. Edited by John Pick. Oxford. $4.50. Which reveals the unexpected breadth and intensity of Hopkins' interests.

Paul Klee. By Carola Giedion-Welcker. Viking. $7.50. In which a wide selection of Klee's art is accompanied by an exegesis that relates his work to the central developments of our time in popular culture, in psychology and society.

Changing Concepts of Time. By H. A. Innis. Toronto University. Innis, a little known pioneer in communication study, has opened up the relations between media of

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PATRICK F. QUINN

MY choices in the 1953 literary sweepstakes are four long-shots that should give a good account of themselves.

Roger Williams. By Perry Miller. Bobbs-Merrill. $3. Miller's almost uncanny ability to clarify the intricacies of Puritan theology is put to excellent use in this book—at once a biography of Williams, a study of his thought, and an anthology of his writings—so that we have the man set at last in his proper historical niche and his contribution to the American heritage clearly defined.

The Doctor and the Devils. By Dylan Thomas. New Directions. $2.50. A melodrama with a serious moral point, this absorbing scenario of a forthcoming British film about a brilliant Edinburgh anatomist of the 1820's and his collusion with a pair of professional murderers represents what a poet of genius can do with material that is normally left to the mechanical mercies of the hack scriptwriter.

Childhood's End. By Arthur C. Clarke. Ballantine. 35c. Granted that one would be better advised to reread *War and Peace* or *Bleak House;* nonetheless, science fiction has a peculiar claim on our interest today, and it seems unlikely that one could find a more expert instance of the *genre* than this intelligent and remarkably imaginative novel.

Poetry and the Age. By Randall Jarrell. Knopf. $4. The title is misleading; but in most of the essays that make up this book Jarrell shows how illuminating "modern criticism" can be when practiced by someone who enjoys his subject, understands it thoroughly, and is blessed in addition with common sense and a command of style.

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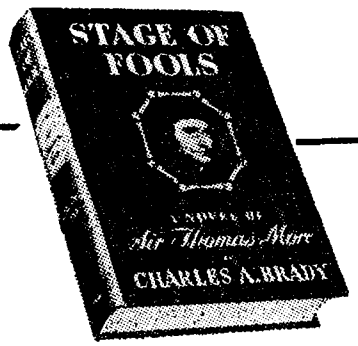

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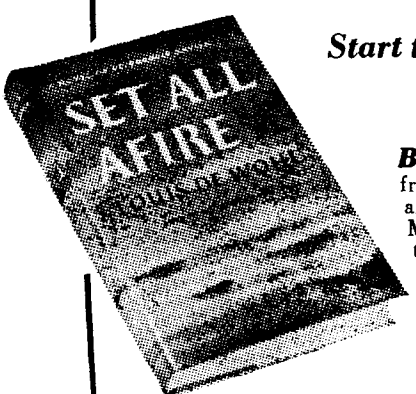

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